

SERVE Illinois

N E W S L E T T E R

A Prevention First publication

Spring 2007

Cesar Chavez Breakfast

More than 200 service-learning supporters joined Lt. Governor Pat Quinn and other dignitaries for the 4th Annual Cesar Chavez Serve and Learn Program breakfast celebration at Gage Park High School (5630 S. Rockwell Ave., Chicago, Illinois). The educational initiative teaches students the importance of service to others through academic instruction and community service projects.

Chavez's granddaughter Julie Chavez Rodriguez delivered the stirring keynote address and Univision radio host Javier Salas served as the emcee for the event.



Julie Chavez Rodriguez, granddaughter of Cesar E. Chavez, presented the keynote address at the Serve & Learn Program breakfast named for her grandfather.

During the week of March 31 (Chavez's birthday), students and teachers throughout Illinois performed a range of curriculum-based activities to celebrate Chavez's life, including murals, food drives, commemorative marches, anti-gang workshops, drama performances and biographical collages. Visit www.ServeAndLearn.org for more information.

"Cesar Chavez's legacy of leadership is one of nonviolent, grassroots organizing and service to others," Quinn said. "His dedication and sacrifice improved the lives of thousands of people, and encouraging students to learn by serving their communities is a great way to honor the memory of this American hero."

Working with the Cesar E. Chavez Foundation, the Illinois State Board of Education, and Chicago Public Schools, almost 150 projects participated in the 2007 program organized by the lieutenant governor's office.

Chavez was a civil rights crusader who dedicated his life to improving the standard of living, wages and working conditions of farm workers. An organizer of skilled laborers, he founded the National Farm Workers Association, which later became the United Farm Workers Union (UFW).



Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn poses with students at the annual Cesar Chavez breakfast in Chicago.



Students from the Harriet Beecher Stowe Fine Arts & Performing Academy performed at the breakfast.



YOU CAN CHANGE THE WORLD!
NATIONAL & GLOBAL YOUTH SERVICE DAY
APRIL 20-22, 2007 www.ysa.org/nysd



See page 4 for more information on finding a project near you!

From the Secretary



As spring approaches, we are again entering a busy "season of service." The annual Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning has recently passed, and the coming months bring a focus on volunteerism and community service by citizens of all ages, races, creeds, and abilities. Please join the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service as we promote the following events:

National Volunteer Week: April 15-21, 2007 • The purpose of National Volunteer Week is to recognize and celebrate the efforts of volunteers at the local, state and national level. It is about thanking one of our nation's most valuable assets – the community volunteer. More information is available at www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons/nvw.

National & Global Youth Service Day: April 20-22, 2007 • The largest service event in the world, National & Global Youth Service Day expands the impact of the youth service movement and empowers young people to make a difference in their communities. To learn more about the N&GYSD projects being coordinated by the Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service's AmeriCorps programs, visit www.ysa.org/map and select "Illinois."

Join Hands Day: May 5, 2007 • Join Hands Day encourages youth and adults to volunteer together. This service day gives fraternal benefit societies and volunteer organizations the opportunity to reach out to people they don't know, to connect generations and develop new relationships. Visit www.joinhandsday.org for more information.

National AmeriCorps Week: May 13-20, 2007 • National AmeriCorps Week is a week-long event designed to bring more Americans into service, to salute AmeriCorps Members and alumni for their powerful impact, and to thank community partners who make AmeriCorps possible. This first-ever National AmeriCorps Week will mark a historic milestone as the 500,000th AmeriCorps Member will take the pledge to "get things done for America." Visit www.americorps.gov for more information.

Please contact the Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service at 800.592.9896 for more information about these and other initiatives of the Commission. You may also visit them on the web at www.illinois.gov/volunteer.

Until next time, let us press on toward the goal of transforming our communities and be especially conscious these coming months of the value of Illinois volunteers.

Sincerely,

Carol L. Adams, Ph.D., Secretary
Illinois Department of Human Services

From the Chair



Youth volunteerism is the theme this month, as we tout service projects being coordinated across Illinois by our AmeriCorps*State programs for the upcoming National & Global Youth Service Day April 20-22. (See page 4 for more information.) After spending many years of my professional life working for and with youth organizations across the State of Illinois, I want to take this opportunity to encourage our *SERVE Illinois* readers to take the time to locate a project near them and to help us spread the word about the Illinois Commission's first statewide service day for youth. Visit www.ysa.org/nysd or call 800.592.9896 for more information.

Of course, on the other end of the age spectrum, I encourage adults and seniors to join these inspiring youth in their efforts across the state this month and in the future. In March, I had the opportunity to visit with members and program administrators of the Senior Corps national service programs (Retired Senior Volunteer Programs, Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions) in Illinois at their annual conference in Champaign. This group holds as much inspiration as the youth and serves communities in a variety of capacities through Senior Corps programs. I want to commend both groups for the work they are doing every day for the citizens of Illinois.

A third group that is too often forgotten in terms of ability to serve and a segment of the population that continues to be a target of the current State Service Plan includes people with disabilities and other special needs populations. Please see page 6 of this newsletter for another inspiring story that demonstrates the importance of engaging people with disabilities in volunteerism.

Remember, as the Commission seeks to raise the state's ranking in rates of volunteerism nationwide, we must look to those who are already doing despite the challenges that circumstances or society may present. And we must keep open the possibilities for engagement amongst all the citizens of Illinois.

Sincerely,

Dave Lawrence, Chairman
Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service

Barrington Hills and Wheaton, Illinois Youth Selected

12th Annual Prudential "Spirit of Community" National Awards Program for 2007

Over the past 12 years, Prudential Spirit of Community Awards have been given to more than 2,500 middle and high school students across Illinois for helping the less fortunate, promoting health and safety, protecting the environment and serving their communities through many other volunteer activities. These awards,



presented nationwide by Prudential Financial, Inc. in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), honor outstanding community service by young people in grades 5 through 12.

Rishi Sethi, 18, of Barrington Hills and Kendall Ciesemier, 14, of Wheaton are Illinois' Prudential Spirit of

Community Award Honorees for 2007. Rishi was honored for founding the Barrington School District Chess Program nine years ago; he has since helped introduce the game of chess to schools throughout his district. He has helped raise \$10,000 for local and international charities through hosting chess tournaments in places such as a grocery store, a nursing home, a church and hospitals. Kendall was recognized for forming a nonprofit organization that has raised \$50,000 since 2004 to benefit AIDS orphans in Africa. Kendall, who has faced her own struggles as she underwent two liver transplants, was inspired to volunteer by watching an Oprah Winfrey TV special about the African AIDS epidemic – specifically in the country of Zambia. Honorees were awarded a trip to Washington, D.C., a \$1,000 scholarship, a certificate and medallion from Prudential, and the President's Volunteer Service Award.

"People as caring and committed as these young students are critical to the future of our neighborhoods, our cities and our nation," Arthur Ryan, chairman and CEO of Prudential, said. "By recognizing these honorees, we hope to encourage other young people – our future leaders – and all Americans to think more about the value and importance of volunteering in their communities."

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards represent the United States' largest youth recognition program based solely on community service, and have honored more than 70,000 young volunteers at local, state and national levels since the program began in 1995. NASSP promotes the intellectual growth, academic achievement, character development, leadership development and physical well-being of youth through its programs and student leadership services.

For more information on the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards or to obtain applications, call toll-free 888.450.9961, or visit www.prudential.com/spirit or www.principals.org/prudential.



The mission of the Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service

is to improve Illinois communities by supporting and enhancing volunteerism and community service.

Commissioners, appointed by the governor, represent experience in local government, labor, education, older adults, public health, non-profits, business, volunteerism and national service. www.illinois.gov/volunteer



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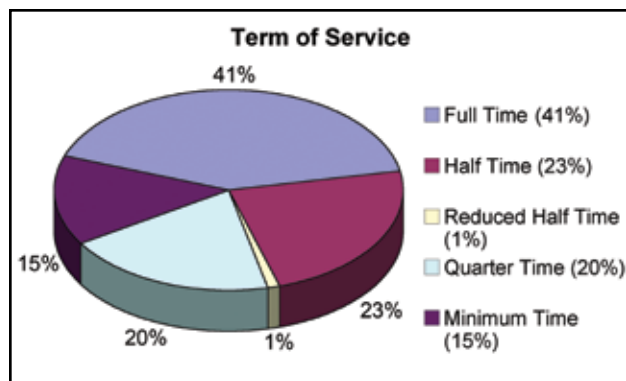
IMPORTANT CONTACTS AT DHS

Steven Guerra, Director,
Division of Community Health and Prevention
Kim Fornero, Chief, Bureau of Community-Based and Primary Prevention

NUMBERS you should know

Meet Our Members

The Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service provides the following data recently compiled on the Illinois AmeriCorps Class of 2006-2007, based on records from the 21 AmeriCorps*State programs administered by the Commission. The chart and table below present demographical statistics related to the membership of Illinois AmeriCorps programs, as well as information regarding term of service, reasons for involvement and how they learned about AmeriCorps.



Illinois AmeriCorps Class of 2006-2007 AmeriCorps Member Demographics

Gender	Male	28%
	Female	72%
Age	18-24	72%
	25-50	23%
	51+	5%
Educational Level Attained	High school / GED	25%
	Technical, apprenticeship, associate degree, some college	50%
	College graduate	19%
	Some graduate school or graduate degree	6%
Reason Members Joined	Community service	55%
	Scholarship	24%
	Earn money	8%
	Explore interests	6%
	Be part of national service movement	5%
	Learn about other groups/ethnicities	3%
How Members Learned About AmeriCorps	Through friend, relative, other AmeriCorps Member	48%
	Print media	19%
	School	13%
	Internet or TV	11%
	Recruited by AmeriCorps program	6%
	Other	3%

Compiled in January 2007 and based on 625 AmeriCorps*State Members across Illinois. These statistics are subject to continual change.

LEADERCORPS

Statewide Day of Service

Illinois LeaderCorps is currently in full swing planning service for the National & Global Youth Service Day (NGYSD) taking place throughout the state April 20-22, 2007, with an emphasis on the environment. Through conference calls and regional meetings, the LeaderCorps subcommittees are working to create a powerful and united weekend of service for Illinois. The role breakdown for the subcommittees follows:

- **Coordinating:** Work with other LeaderCorps programs to identify resources; create united service for the NGYSD weekend.
- **Volunteer:** Contact Illinois AmeriCorps programs with information about NGYSD; provide resources to Illinois AmeriCorps programs to engage community organizations, schools, and individuals.
- **Public Relations:** Provide "letter to the editor" and "public service announcement" templates to all Illinois AmeriCorps programs; determine media resources throughout the state; create speaking points for media engagement throughout the NGYSD weekend.



Illinois AmeriCorps Members help beautify public lands during NGYSD 2006.

Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, through Youth Service America "Lead Agency" grant, more than 10 service day collaborations are planned for NGYSD throughout the state.

For more information about upcoming projects in your area, or to collaborate with these powerful service partners, please visit www.ysa.org/map and select "Illinois" to view project listings. Or simply call the Commission's toll-free information line, 800.592.9896, for further details.

Illinois LeaderCorps is a member-organized council that connects AmeriCorps programs and acts as a liaison between Members and the Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service. The mission of LeaderCorps is to connect AmeriCorps programs in Illinois through state, national and global days of service and to promote continued AmeriCorps alumni involvement.



Illinois LeaderCorps Members comprising the "National & Global Youth Service Day-Illinois Coordinating Committee," shown on the steps of the Illinois State Capitol, met on March 23 to make final preparations for the April 20-21 events across the state.

Through the hard work of AmeriCorps volunteers and resources provided by the Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, through Youth Service America "Lead Agency" grant, more than 10 service day collaborations are planned for NGYSD throughout the state.

For more information about upcoming projects in your area, or to collaborate with these powerful service partners, please visit www.ysa.org/map and select "Illinois" to view project listings. Or simply call the Commission's toll-free information line, 800.592.9896, for further details.

State Farm Grant Winners

On Monday, February 26, Lt. Governor Pat Quinn, Secretary of State Jesse White and representatives from State Farm® saluted three Illinois institutions whose hard work and dedication to community earned them a combined total of nearly \$216,000 in service-learning grants.

The Harry D. Jacobs High School in Algonquin, the Chicago Urban League and the Illinois Institute of Technology are the three Illinois grant winners selected by the State Farm Youth Advisory Board, a diverse group of 30 student leaders who were chosen through a competitive process to oversee State Farm's innovative, youth-led service-learning initiative. The winners were awarded grants to complete the following projects:

Driver Safety, Harry D. Jacobs High School - Algonquin

The mission of Jacob High School's Project Ignition team is to expand their "In the Blink of an Eye" safety awareness program by mentoring youth leaders from the Great Lakes region. The project aims to promote safety awareness and decrease the number of teen-driving tragedies. Project Ignition emphasizes that driving is strength and a privilege, not a weakness that takes away the right to live.

Financial Education, Chicago Urban League

In 1999, the Chicago Urban League initiated the Youth Investor/Entrepreneur Project (YIEP). In partnership with Brooks College Prep Academy and King College Prep High School, the project will now offer financial literacy courses to an additional 200 participants a year, including 50 additional teens and 150 adults.

Disaster Preparedness, Illinois Institute of Technology - Chicago

This project ensures that young people acquire proficiency in life-saving skills, including Basic First Aid, CPR and Automated External Defibrillation (AED) certifications, and gain experiential knowledge of community service by becoming disaster preparedness educators and facilitators for their families, schools and communities. They will develop, educate, and mentor State Farm/CAHMCP Youth Community Survival Teams composed of Chicago area inner-city high school students.

To learn more about service-learning in Illinois, please visit www.serveandlearn.org



Harry D. Jacobs High School students and staff, Secretary of State Jesse White, representatives from State Farm and Lt. Governor Pat Quinn celebrate Jacobs' service-learning grant.

Volunteers: The Essential Piece

Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration

May 10-11, 2007

Oak Brook Marriott Hotel
Oak Brook, Illinois

The 2007 Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration (ICOVA) offers professional development and training opportunities for new and experienced volunteer administrators. It is also a wonderful opportunity to network with peers in the voluntary sector. In addition to a wide range of typical volunteer management topics, other areas covered by the conference this year include *generational volunteerism; fundraising/financial management series; and special needs volunteerism*. These new workshop "series" sessions are independent of each other, yet they follow special themes related to the management of volunteers and volunteer programs. The ICOVA bookstore is also back this year, offering participants an opportunity to purchase supporting material for workshop sessions and other related resources.

Returning for the third straight year, ICOVA has partnered with the Volunteer Centers of Illinois to provide a separate training track called the *Volunteer Management Training Series*



(VMTS). VMTS is a special certification program designed for those working with volunteers who have been in the field for less than one year, or those with no formal training in volunteer management. This training track runs simultaneous to the conference breakout sessions, and is open to anyone interested for an alternate registration fee.

The 2007 ICOVA conference will kick off with a keynote address from R. Dale Evans, Social Services Coordinator for the Joliet Area Housing Authority and longtime ICOVA participant and presenter. Dale brings his passion and enthusiasm for service to the conference in order to motivate others to succeed. Jen White, leadership consultant and trainer from Peoria, Illinois, will entertain the group during Thursday's lunch session. Her unique brand of "info-tainment" brings delight and practical knowledge to people of all ages and disciplines. ICOVA will conclude on Friday with entertainment from the Rising Stars Arts Ensemble, a Chicago-area, community-based music youth program. Be prepared to be "wowed" by these teens!

To register or for more information, please visit www.icova.org or e-mail icovaconference@hotmail.com.



McHenry County AmeriCorps Member Making a Difference

Have you ever had an employer, upon notice of resignation, look at you, laugh and say, “Good luck! No one will ever hire you because you are in a wheelchair”? Katie Nauert has. Katie is a full-time student working on her bachelor’s degree and hopes to work in juvenile probation someday. She is also a part-time AmeriCorps of McHenry County Member working with severely emotionally disturbed (SED) middle school students in Crystal Lake, Illinois.

Every day, and with every interaction, Katie is subjected to the automatic judgment of others. She cannot help that people see her in a mobile wheelchair and make assumptions on her emotional and mental status. This is an obstacle that Katie has used humor to overcome. She constantly jokes about her chair, and with her smile and confident sense of self, she offers a space of comfort to those who feel uncomfortable.

Paralyzed from the waist down after a car accident in college, Katie was told by her doctors that she would never be able to move her arms again. She did not accept this belief and worked harder to not only move her arms, but to gain full control of her ability to perform fine motor skills (such as writing). Katie has since become more focused on education, building a career with youth, and maintaining a healthy and positive lifestyle. She states that she has increased confidence due to her ability to overcome the doubts of doctors, the stigma from employers, and the loss of friends.

The students Katie serves at Northern Illinois Special Recreation after-school program have a variety of emotional illnesses. From ADD, ADHD, depression, Asperger’s syndrome, bipolar disorder and social isolation to aggressive behavior, they all have experienced feelings of isolation and been targets of prejudice. Katie is able to relate to this feeling and share her own experience of meeting new people and coping with their inappropriate and inaccurate assumptions. The overall goal of this after-school program is to help reduce social isolation for these youth.

The overwhelmingly positive and determined attitude that Katie and her fellow AmeriCorps Members are instilling in these youth is impacting the way in which our community views youth with SEDs. In addition, it reinforces the concept that youth with SEDs are still youth. Katie’s optimism, determination, and confidence demonstrates that anyone - even people with disabilities who have never worked with youth with SEDs - can make a difference. All youth, despite existing mental or emotional illnesses, deserve to be treated as unique individuals who have personalities, goals and possibilities of their own. And like Katie, they too can overcome these perceived barriers and lead a life of service to others.

-- Submitted by Elizabeth Bean, AmeriCorps Program Coordinator
McHenry County Mental Health Board



AmeriCorps Member Katie Nauert working with a youth in the Northern Illinois Special Recreation after-school program.

AmeriCorps Alums and Friends, **REGISTER NOW** on www.lifetimeofservice.org!

Starting May 13th, membership dues are \$25 annually and \$250 for lifetime membership.



TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Planning Your Volunteer Program (and Engaging Staff)

April 18, 2007 9 a.m. to noon

Community Resource Network Volunteer Center, Chicago, Illinois
312.491.7824

mkruse@communityresourcenetwork.org

Part of the Volunteer Management Training Series developed by the Points of Light Foundation and Volunteer Center National Network

Building Strategic Relationships with Corporations and Foundations

April 23, 2007 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Donors Forum of Chicago, Conference Room, Chicago, Illinois
www.donorsforum.org/calendar/npcalendar.html

Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration

"Volunteers . . . The Essential Piece"

May 10 – 11, 2007

Oak Brook Marriott

Oak Brook, Illinois

www.icova.org

Volunteer Management Training Series

May 10 – 11, 2007 (2 full days)

Presented at the Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration

Oak Brook Marriott, Oak Brook, Illinois
www.icova.org

Part of the Volunteer Management Training Series developed by the Points of Light Foundation and Volunteer Center National Network

Engaging People with Disabilities in Volunteering

Date and time to be announced

Community Resource Network Volunteer Center
312.491.7824

mkruse@communityresourcenetwork.org

Association of Volunteer Administrators of Metropolitan Chicago

Sharing/Networking/Training

Fourth Tuesday of every month

773.753.1382

matt.porth@msichicago.org

For More Ongoing Professional Development Opportunities in Illinois and Nationwide:

Donor's Forum of Chicago

www.donorsforum.org

Institute for Charitable Giving

www.instituteforgiving.org

The Axelson Center for Nonprofit Management, North Park University

www.northpark.edu/axelson/

The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University

www.philanthropy.iupui.edu

The Academy for Nonprofit Excellence, College of DuPage

www.cod.edu/nonprofit

The Resource Center of the Corporation for National and Community Service

(Tools and Training for Volunteer and Service Programs)

www.nationalresources.org



ICVCS Training Coordinator Scott Niermann speaks with the Helen Chukwu, attendee at the 2007 Transformation Conference, about volunteerism and the AmeriCorps national service program.

The conference, held March 6 & 7, was hosted in Springfield by the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Illinois State Board of Education. For more information about community health and prevention-related professional development opportunities, visit www.prevention.org.

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Upcoming Days of Service

April 15-21, 2007

National Volunteer Week, www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons/nvw

April 20-22, 2007

National & Global Youth Service Day, www.ysa.org/nysd/ or www.servenet.org

May 5, 2007

Join Hands Day, www.joinhandsday.org

May 13-20, 2007

National AmeriCorps Week, www.americorps.gov



The Commission presents this year's National & Global Youth Service Day (NGYSD) as its first coordinated, statewide youth service day, and solicits your support and involvement. Visit www.ysa.org/map and click on "Illinois" to view a list of projects in your region. Call ICVCS at the number below if you'd like additional information.



SERVE Illinois is a publication of the Illinois Commission on Volunteerism & Community Service. Send articles for submission and suggestions to:

SERVE Illinois Editor

Illinois Commission on Volunteerism & Community Service

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DHS.SERVEIllinois@Illinois.gov

800.592.9896

TTY 888.261.2713

This material is based upon work supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service under AmeriCorps Grant No. 05PTHIL001. Opinions or points of view expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Corporation for National Service or the AmeriCorps program.



Illinois AmeriCorps Disability Outreach Project: Meeting the needs for AmeriCorps Members of all backgrounds and abilities.



"Building Stronger Communities Through Service"

Published by
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